

identical vehicle not having a hidden storage system, said external appearance being substantially the same as a substantially identical vehicle not having a hidden storage system [which does not substantially alter an external appearance or increase a width of the vehicle compared to an external appearance of an identical vehicle without the hidden storage system], said hidden storage system being located intermediate said side panels and comprising:

at least one storage box having an opening to expose an interior thereof mounted on at least one side of said vehicle;

at least one section of one of the side panels on at least said one side of said vehicle being hinged, whereby said at least one section of said one side panel can be opened to expose the interior of said storage box and closed to cover the exterior of said storage box;

at least one mechanism mounted to at least assist in opening and to releasably secure said at least one hinged section of said one side panel; and

~~means for actuating said at least one mechanism.~~

✓ Claim 5, line 2, after "group" insert --of actuated means--.

✓ Claim 25, line 6, after "with" insert --a width and--;

line 14, after "for" insert --at least assisting in }

opening and for--.

1/6 Claim 31, line 3, after "box" insert --is selected from the group which--.

Claim 35, amend to read as follows:

35. (Thrice Amended) A hidden storage system for a vehicle having a conventional bed without increasing the width or substantially altering an external appearance of side panels of the conventional bed compared to a width of and an external appearance of an identical bed without the hidden storage system, said conventional bed comprising a floor section, a front wall section, two side panel sections mounted to opposite sides of said floor section, and a tailgate section, with said front wall, side panels and tailgate sections being of substantially the same height, and being adapted to be mounted on a vehicle having wheels, said storage system comprising:

a storage box having an opening mounted over said floor section and intermediate said two side panel sections and on at least one side of said conventional bed, said opening of said storage box being located adjacent one of said side panel sections of said at least one side of said conventional bed,

at least one portion of an overall length of said one of said side panel sections adjacent said storage box being hinged, whereby said hinged portion of said one of said side panel sections can be moved outward to expose an interior of said storage box via said opening in said storage box and moved inwardly to cover said opening and thus the interior of said storage box without substantially altering the height of and the external appearance of

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said one side panel section of said conventional bed, and

a mechanism mounted to at least assist in opening and to  
releasably secure said at least one hinged portion of said one side  
panel section.

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Claim 43, amend to read as follows:

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43. (Twice Amended) In a vehicle having contoured side panels  
43 with external surfaces defining a width of the vehicle, a hidden  
storage system located intermediate said contoured side panels  
comprising:

at least one hinged contoured side panel section in at  
least one of said side panels,

at least one storage box having an interior and an  
opening therein located intermediate said contoured side panels and  
adjacent said at least one hinged contoured side panel section, and

a mechanism for at least retaining said at least one  
hinged contoured side panel section closed,

said hidden storage system being constructed to not  
increase the width or substantially alter an [external] appearance of  
said external surfaces of the contoured side panels of the vehicle  
compared to a width of and an external appearance of an identical  
vehicle without the hidden storage system.

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✓ Claim 45, line 4, after "from" insert --one of-;

✓ line 5, after "group" insert --of means--.

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